

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 33183

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, WB, GW, US, UK, FR

SUBJECT: QUADRIpartite MEETINGS DURING NATO MINISTERIAL

REF: SECTO 24035

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: FRENCH WERE PLEASED WITH LAST WEEK'S QUADRIpartite MEETINGS IN BRUSSELS. THEY SUPPORT US INITIATIVE FOR GREATER CONSIDERATION BY BONN GROUP OF POSITIVE ASPECTS OF BERLIN SITUATION. THEY ALSO EXPECT THAT PARTICIPATION OF BERLINERS IN EC PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WILL CONTINUE TO POSE PROBLEMS FOR ALLIES, BUT GOF WILL STICK TO ITS FIRM LINE. OUR QUAI SOURCE THOUGHT SENIOR-LCVEL FORRAT AT MINISTERIAL WAS USEFUL AND SHOULD BE EXPANDED. END SUMMARY.

2. PLAISANT (QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FCR CENTRAL EUROPE), WHO PARTICIPATED IN QUADRIpartite ACTIVITIES DURING RECENT NATO MINISTERIAL, HAS GIVEN US HIS IMPRESSIONS OF
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THOSE FOUR-POWER MEETINGS. FRENCH WERE STRUCK BY

UNACCUSTOMED DEGREE OF SILENCE EXHIBITED BY BRITISH SIDE THROUGHOUT MEETINGS. PLAISANT ASCRIBED THIS TO FACT THAT SEVERAL KEY MEMBERS OF UK QUADRIpartite TEAM WERE NEW AND UNDERSTANDABLY DID NOT WANT TO STICK THEIR NECKS OUT UNTIL THEY HAD BETTER APPRECIATION FOR PITFALLS OF SUBJECT. CALLAGHAN, TOO, SURPRISED FRERCH BY HIS RELATIVELY PASSIVE ROLE. CONSEQUENTLY, MOST OF THE DISCUSSION WAS LEFT IN HANDS OF GERMANS, FRENCH AND AMERICANS.

3. FRENCH AGREE FULLY WITH HARTMAN'S IDCA (REFTEL, PARA 4) THAT BONN GROUP PAPER TENDED TO FOCUS TOO MUCH ON PROBLEMS WHILE NOT GIVING SUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO THE MORE POSITIVE ELEMENTS IN THE EERLIN SITUATION. PLAISANT ADDED THAT THIS IS TRUE OF MUCH OF THE OTHER BONN GROUP WORK AS WELL. FRENCH HOPE BONN GROUP WILL FOLLOW UP ON HARTMAN'S SUGGESTION AND GIVE MORE RECOGNITION TO POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN BERLIN. MOREOVER, FRENCH APPRECIATED THE "BALANCED AND ACCURATE" REPORT OF THE SENIOR-LEVEL MEETING GIVEN BY HARTMAN TO QUADRIpartite MINISTERS.

4. ON GENERAL SUBJECT OF SENIOR-LEVEL MEETINGS ON BERLIN AND GERMANY, PLAISANT SAID THAT PERSONALLY HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE TIME SET ASIDE FOR THIS TYPE OF VALUABLE EXCHANGE. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE WAS SUFFICIENT SUBSTANCE TO MERIT MORNING AND AFTERNOON SESSIONS OF SENIOR-LEVEL GROUP AT LAST WEEK'S MINISTERIAL. HE TEMPERED THIS OBSERVATION BY NOTING THE RESTRAINT THAT IS IMPOSED ON MOVES IN THIS DIRECTION BY COMPETING DEMANDS ON SENIOR-LEVEL PARTICIPANTS CAUSED BY REGULAR BUSINESS OF NATO MINISTERIAL AND BILATERAL CONTACTS THAT TAKE PLACE ON THE FRINGE OF MINISTERIALS.

5. NOTING THAT AFTER THE QUADRIpartite MEETING THE GERMAN SPOKESMAN WAS SUPPOSED TO TELL GERMAN PRESS THAT THE FOUR POWERS HAD AGREED EERLINERS WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTION OF EC PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE SAME MANNER AS FRG RESIDENTS, PLAISANT SAID FRENCH HAVE NOT SEEN THIS LINE EMERGING IN GERMAN PRESS AS A RESULT OF CONFIDENTIAL

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WHAT THE GERMAN SPOKESMAN MAY (OR MAY NOT) HAVE SAID. PLAISANT ADDED THAT HE BELIEVES SUBJECT OF ROLE OF BERLINERS IN EC PARLIAMENTARIAN ELECTIONS WILL CONTINUE TO BE SOURCE OF SOME DIFFICULTY FOR ALLIES. HE EXPECTS THAT GERMANS WILL BE TEMPTED TO COME UP WITH A PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING BERLIN'S PARTICIPATION THAT THEY WILL DEFEND AS "INDIRECT ELECTIONS," BUT WHICH WILL HAVE ASPECTS GIVING RISE TO POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION AS

"CIRECT ELECTION." HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT FRENCH WILL
CONTINUE TO BE FIRM "STRICT CONSTRUCTIONISTS" ON THIS
ISSUE.
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